



By Faith Noah being warned of God of things not seen as yet prepared an Ark to the saving of his house.

Many called, but few chose.

They looked for a city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God.

At this day whom ye will receive.

This same Jesus shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word.

Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end.

The Kingdom and dominion shall be given to the people of the Most High.

John had first preached before his coming the baptism of repentance.

Jesus came into Galilee preaching the gospel of the Kingdom of God.

At midnight there was a cry made. Behold the bridegroom cometh.

I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

He that overcometh shall inherit all things.

The Megiddo Message

Devoted to the Cause of Christ

The Coming Judgment

BAFFLED WISHES

CHAINS OF OUR OWN FORGING

TRIBULUM

MUSINGS OF THE EDITOR

MEDITATIONS ON THE WORD

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

GOD'S CARE

Vol. 43, No. 17

August 25, 1956

The Megiddo Message

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Percy J. Thatcher, Editor

A religious magazine, devoted to the cause of Christ and published for the dissemination of Bible truth alone, THE MEGIDDO MESSAGE will

- Strengthen your faith in the Bible
- Answer perplexing religious questions
- Give you courage for these uncertain times
- Help you live above the world's moral corruption
- Reveal to you how to develop a character acceptable to God
- Bring peace and stability to your life

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—Proverbs 3: 13, 14; 4: 13.

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SERIES:

Types and Shadows in the Mosaic Law

Part Seven (Conclusion)

THE COMING JUDGMENT

Depicted in the Great Day of Atonement* (Leviticus 16)

AS WITH THE MOSAIC LAW written upon tables of stone, the Sabbath, the Priesthood, the Tabernacle, the Sacrificial system, and the various specified feasts, the DAY OF ATONEMENT contained only the shadow of future good things, but not these things themselves (Heb. 10:1), and is "like in pattern to the true" (Heb. 9:24).

The Day of Atonement, the most solemn occasion in all the year, preceded the Feast of Tabernacles, falling on the 10th day of the 7th month. It was a day of fasting (the only fast enjoined by law), and a cessation from all labor; it was also a day of holy convocation, when all Israel were required to assemble at the sanctuary (Lev. 16:29—31; 23:26—32).

On that day a solemn and impressive drama was enacted, depicting the future Day of Judgment. All was carried out in strict accordance with minute directions supplied by God. Though the realization of that which was typified still lay in the far future, the details of that drama carried deep significance for a people educated in and familiar with the meaning of the symbols employed.

The Sanctification of the High Priest

Under the priesthood system, Aaron and those who succeeded him served in a figure of Christ, who is to be the High Priest of the future, everlasting arrangement.

"But Christ being come a high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. . . . It was necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these" (Heb. 9:11, 12, 23).

Christ's lifetime work of purification for this office was typified on the Day of Atonement in the process required for the sanctification of the high priest.

On this occasion Aaron, the high priest, did not, as upon other days, wear the insignia of his high priestly office, but sacred garments of holy white linen were provided especially for the occasion. In the symbolical language of the Scriptures, white linen is typical of righteousness, of a spotless and holy character.

"Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy" (Rev. 3:4).

"And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints" (Rev. 19:8).

In preparation for this day, Aaron was required to supply himself with a young bullock for a sin offering

and a ram for a burnt offering. The congregation were to supply two goats for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering.

With all in readiness, as the first step, Aaron entered the tent of the tabernacle and there bathed himself, preliminary to putting on the holy white linen, by this act signifying how that Christ, the eternal High Priest, must likewise pass through a thorough cleansing for the purpose of eliminating every defilement from His character.

The Psalmist shows of what the antitypical washing consists:

"Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. . . . Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow" (51:2, 7).

After bathing, Aaron put on the simple white linen garments, and on his forehead a miter inscribed with the words "Holiness to the Lord." Thenceforward he became a figure of one adorned with a character of spotless purity.

Going forth from the tent, he proceeded to slay his bullock, demonstrating in a figure Christ's death to sin.

"For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God" (Rom. 6:10).

Taking up the blood of the bullock in a vessel, together with a censor full of burning coals of fire from off the altar, and two handfuls of sweet incense beaten small, he entered within the veil into the most holy place, while the congregation waited outside.

What a lovely figure of our eternal High Priest Aaron made as he disappeared into the most holy place, robed in garments of righteousness, on his forehead the miter bearing the insignia, "Holiness to the Lord," carrying with him the blood of his sacrifice as a token of his death to sin, and fire from the altar ("Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord"—Jer. 23:29), and, lastly, two handfuls of sweet incense beaten small, typifying the full, rich, and sweet communion with the Father that was manifest in the life of the Master whom he represented.

"... thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; called of God a high priest after the order of Melchisedec" (Heb. 5:6—10).

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Many years now, Christ, our High Priest, has been in the Most Holy Place with the Father. But as surely as Aaron came forth again on that Day of Atonement, so surely shall Christ return to His people. There is a blessing in store for the faithful when He returns. Let none

* Atonement—derived from "at one," "at peace," signifying "to make reconciliation."

of us be of that number who grow tired of waiting and go home (I John 2:19; Hab. 2:3). Unless we are ready and waiting for Him at His returning, we can never be a part of the faithful who shall receive the blessings the righteous shall share.

Beyond the Veil

Were it not for the types and shadows that have been given us, and which have been confirmed again in the words of Jesus, the Prophets, and Apostles, we would have no knowledge of the meaning or purpose of those wondrous events which are now taking place behind the veil, where Christ has now gone. Praise God for the things which were written aforetime, that they were "written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope" (Rom. 15:4)!

The instructions which God laid down for Aaron, to be carried out when he entered into the most holy place, were:

"And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is upon the testimony, that he die not: and he shall take of the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it with his finger upon the mercy seat eastward; and before the mercy seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times" (Lev. 16:13, 14).

This type illustrated how that Christ must appear before the presence of God to be judged. His faithfulness, His devotion, His unfailing obedience to all of God's commands being demonstrated, He is granted life—*immortal life*. The sprinkling of blood is a token of His death to sin; the seven times sprinkling testifying that that dying to sin took place throughout His entire day of probation—it was a *lifelong* sacrifice.

Into this most holy place the high priest entered alone, even as Christ, who said to His disciples:

"Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you. . . . Let not your heart be troubled. . . . I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 13:33; 14:1,3).

To this the angels add the hope:

"This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11).

How the fulfillment of those things which are coming to pass in such wondrous and unvarying accordance with the types and shadows furnished so many centuries before, strengthens our faith today!

The Coming Judgment

A SEPARATION—

When Christ, our eternal High Priest, returns from the presence of God, a Judgment will immediately take place, a separation.

"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered [out of] all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left" (Matt. 25:31—33).

To typify this, Aaron, when he had emerged from the most holy place, was required to take the two goats representing the sin offering for the congregation, and present them before the Lord at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

"And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for the Lord, and the other lot for the scapegoat" (Lev. 16:8).

The word translated "scapegoat" is *Azazel*. Its definition is: "far removed," "going far away," "separation." The definition of "lot" is: "that which falls to anyone by inheritance."

As those two goats represented the whole congregation of Israel—not the whole world, not the heathen nations, but only those under the jurisdiction of God's Law—so everyone (both faithful and unfaithful) who has placed himself under the jurisdiction of that law of God which is higher than the Law of Moses, shall be gathered before the Lord in that Day of Assize. No one who has made himself liable to the law can escape.

THE REWARD OF THE RIGHTEOUS—

The High Priest now becomes the intercessor for the faithful. In demonstration of this, Aaron was commanded to kill the goat of the sin offering for the people and bring his blood within the veil, doing with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock for himself.

But the ritual this time had an added feature: The blood was sprinkled first in the inner sanctuary, then in the tabernacle, and lastly upon the altar, signifying *the complete cleansing of the sanctuary*.

This complete cleansing did not take place, as the religious world at large teach today, when the High Priest brought His own sacrifice within the veil. It took place only when the sacrifice of the congregation had been made.

The Lord was further very specific to state that until this process had been completed, no one but the high priest was to be present within the tabernacle, typifying that until the sanctification of the congregation is complete, Christ is the only acting Priest, the only occupant, as it were, of the future eternal tabernacle.

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Throughout these events, the unfaithful goat awaits his doom, compelled to behold, yet forbidden to partake of, the reward of the righteous.

"There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out" (Luke 13:28).

THE DOOM OF THE UNFAITHFUL—

When the King has said to those on His right hand, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. . . .

"Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire [destruction]" (Matt. 25:34, 41).

With great vividness this was demonstrated in the type:

"And when he hath made an end of reconciling the holy place, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat: and Aaron shall lay both his

hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: and the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited [of separation—margin]: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness" (Lev. 16: 20—22).

All the remaining sins rest upon the head of the live goat, because the other goat died to sin. Here lies the only distinction between the two goats: on the Day of Judgment one is presented dead, the other alive, typifying first the faithful who *die* to sin, and then the unfaithful who *live* in sin, never crucifying their sinful natures.

As Aaron confessed over the live goat all the iniquities of the Children of Israel, so he showed that the Lord in the coming Day of Judgment is going to "bring to light the hidden things of darkness," and "make manifest the counsels of the hearts" (I Cor. 4: 5).

As the unfaithful Adam and Eve were driven out of the garden, in an earlier type, and compelled to earn their living by the sweat of their brow until they returned unto the dust from whence they came; as Cain, for his transgression in slaying his brother, was condemned to be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; so the goat, representing the unfaithful, is banished into a *land of separation*.

There the unfaithful shall be used as the sword (Ps. 17: 13) of the Lord in the Battle of Armageddon to bring the world into subjection to Divine law. By this means they shall make an at-one-ment between the nations of earth and God. Also they shall aid in rehabilitating the earth to make it a fit abode for the righteous. But at length they shall return to the dust again, because unworthy to take hold of the tree of life and live eternally.

The same two classes—faithful and unfaithful—are shown in Rev. 22: 14, 15,

"Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

"For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie."

In Conclusion

This last act presented on the Day of Atonement is a lovely picture, one that is both thrilling and inspiring.

In the type, Aaron reentered the tabernacle, laid off the holy white linen, leaving it within the holy place. He washed his flesh and dressed in his official robes, expressing how that Christ shall, when the forty years of God's Judgments are ended, be established in the eyes of all the world as King of kings and Prince among the priests. (For evidence of the forty years, see Mic. 7: 15—17; Acts 7: 36.)

Aaron then offered the ram for himself and the other ram for the congregation as whole burnt offerings, typifying the complete dedication of their now sinless lives to the service of the Lord, the sacrifice which Christ and the faithful shall offer up in that coming Day. The fat of the sin offerings was likewise consumed upon the altar.

The final phase of this drama is full of marvelous significance.

The bullock for the sin offering of the high priest and

the goat which became a sin offering for the people were carried outside the camp and burned—the skin, the flesh, and the refuse of them.

In this grand finale is contained the beautiful promise that when the sin offering of the congregation is accepted, then a merciful God will remove from before our eyes all remembrance of sin. God has forgiven, and we as individuals shall then be able to forget that we ever sinned!

"And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin" (Heb. 10: 17, 18).

"If iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away, and let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles. For then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot; yea, thou shalt be steadfast, and shalt not fear: because thou shalt forget thy misery, and remember it as waters that pass away" (Job 11: 14—18).

Now they may look forward with joy to the coming FEAST OF TABERNACLES only four days hence.

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Standing as we do today on the very threshold of the glorious future, it is wonderful indeed to be able to look back and behold how that God has, all down through the ages, since the beginning of His work with mankind, enlightened His people in every basic principle of His plan of salvation. What a wealth of enlightenment and moral instruction underlay those ancient symbols employed by God as a medium of instruction so many years in the past!

How beautiful is the picture of future government foreshadowed in the Mosaic Law! In all its different phases, that Law served to demonstrate some distinct and separate aspect of the plan of salvation. It is marvelous how that out of that great variety of types and shadows so lovely and so complete a pattern emerges—a pattern broad and beautiful, in which there is no overlapping.

THE SABBATH revealed God's plan in respect to *time*, illustrating how that God has appointed 7,000 years for the spiritual development of the inhabitants of this earth. During the first 6,000 years of this period He and His immortal angels conduct the development of a priestly class, who, in turn, shall take up the reins of government, while God rests from His work upon this earth. And during the next 1,000 years they shall bring a vast multitude of men and women to a state of spiritual perfection, after which the earth shall be annexed to Heaven above.

THE PRIESTHOOD foreshadowed God's eternal system of *government*, the character, method of appointment, and office of those whom He shall appoint to conduct the affairs of this earth eternally. It clearly foreshows how that the priests, the first to be sanctified, shall then supervise the sanctification of the Levites, a people who are to be developed during the Millennium, and who shall work together with them in the service of Jehovah throughout ages without end.

THE TABERNACLE, of which the Priesthood was a part, supplied in a figure every spiritual need of man, with the altar for sacrifice; water for cleansing; bread for strength; light for wisdom; law for control; and the Priesthood to direct and oversee all, typifying God's pres-

ence among His people, and foreshadowing that future tabernacle of which every faithful one shall be a part, "a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken," from which spiritual light shall radiate to guide the inhabitants of earth and to bathe the land with effulgent glory forevermore.

THE SACRIFICES, in the sin offerings, vividly depicted the process by which sin is eliminated from the lives of men—that there must be nothing less than a complete death of our former self. In the burnt offerings and the peace offerings were typified the wholesome and acceptable consecration of the "new man"—a consecration which is the mutual delight of God the Eternal Father and all His faithful children.

THE DAY OF ATONEMENT was the climax of the whole sacrificial system, illustrating how that every man who has placed himself under God's Law shall have to appear before the great tribunal, at which time it shall be ascertained whether or not he has died to sin. It further illustrated how that those whose sinful nature is "alive" in that day shall be banished into a land of separation from which there is no returning; and there they shall pass away into darkness and eternal oblivion.

THE FEAST DAYS, the Passover, the Feast of Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles, typified three of the greatest occasions for rejoicing known to the inhabitants of this earth during the 7,000 years of their probation.

The Passover celebrated man's deliverance from a state of spiritual bondage, and the beginning of his opportunity to bring forth fruits unto holiness.

The Feast of Pentecost represented the completion of the harvest of the firstfruits of the earth, the ingathering of the faithful ruling class that shall take place at the end of the 6,000 years.

The Feast of Tabernacles was an even greater time of rejoicing. As in the type at that time the great bulk of the harvest had all been gathered in, it pointed forward to the glad time of rejoicing when the clusters of the earth, the multitude which no man can number, developed during the Millennium, shall be presented to God.

After the seven day Feast of Tabernacles came a glorious Eighth Day, at which time everyone left the booths in which they had been dwelling throughout the seven days, and went home rejoicing; typifying that time when the inhabitants of this earth shall be gathered home into the immortal family.

Oh, wonderful, wonderful Word of the Lord!
True wisdom its pages unfold;
And though we may read them a thousand times o'er,
They never, no never, grow old!

Oh, wonderful, wonderful Word of the Lord!
The hope of God's friends in the past;
Its truths, where so firmly they anchored their trust,
Through ages eternal shall last.

It is not always the conspicuous who deserve the most praise. Any man can work when every stroke of his hand brings down the fruit rattling from the tree to the ground; but to labor in season and out of season, under every discouragement, by the power of truth—that requires a heroism which is transcendent.

Baffled Wishes

WE ARE all vulnerable to what has been called the ancient disease of Ahabitis. I was prone to it only a few days ago, when a friend rang up to tell me that he had just bought a car. You see, among the first half-dozen of the many things I should like is a car, and I can argue quite fluently about the extra work which could be accomplished if I possessed one. There is no harm in that, as far as I can see.

Where the danger lies is in my envying my friend his car; in my unreasonable reaction, as he spoke to me over the telephone, that he is less entitled to it; in the thought which flashed through my mind as he enthused about it—that he has only now started a job I have been doing for some years, and yet, so soon, can have what is beyond my reach.

That, very roughly, is the sin of Ahabitis. For King Ahab himself illustrated the breaking of the Tenth Commandment: "Thou shalt not covet!" It is perilous to disregard that warning. As the Wise Man said, Envy is "the rottenness of the bones."

No doubt you are familiar with the old story of King Ahab. Not satisfied with his palace and vast estates, he wanted a strip of land which belonged to Naboth. The king was willing to pay for it, but there was one snag, Naboth did not want to sell. Obviously this vineyard was a cherished inheritance. It had been in the family a long time. In any case, the Law denounced the selling of inheritances, God being regarded as the real proprietor. So Naboth refused the king's request, as he had every right to do, and Ahab went home chafing and sullen. He lay upon his bed, covered his face, and refused to take any food. He can't have what he wants, so he behaves like a spoiled child.

We may feel impatient with this sulky man, and may want to dismiss him as guilty of sheer childishness. But we can't leave it at that. It wasn't left like that! The outcome was by no means a childish matter. And the attitude adopted by Ahab is so common that we must be warned of its dreadful results.

How many of us sulk when we can't get just what we want! How many people have even left the true church of God because they could not have their own way in everything, and were governed by petulance! It is an acid test of character, and a revealing of the genuineness of our religion, this: How we react when we can't get what we want!

If we would enjoy the precious boon of peace of mind, we must learn to deal with discontent as with a dangerous enemy. Admittedly, there is a healthy type of dissatisfaction. We are right to feel disturbed by conditions which should and can be altered. There is a divinely implanted discontent which acts as a spur to honest endeavor. But this commandment-breaking spirit, this peevishness, this gazing at other people's possessions with covetous eyes, this sulking over things we cannot have, this disease must be severely treated.

Unfortunately, we all have a tendency to remember only what we lack, and to forget what we have. Ahab had many things denied to Naboth; more land, more money, more power. Yet all he saw in this dark hour of

envy was Naboth's vineyard which he, Ahab, had not. We can't have everything in this world, but we can have something. If I am tempted to begrudge my friend his new car, I must pull myself together. After all, I have some things which are outside his orbit.

Sometimes we suspect that life is easier for our neighbor than for us; but, we don't know the whole story. If we did, perhaps we would discover that actually we are much better off, although appearances may not suggest that state of affairs.

In any case, we must emerge from the sheer childishness of discontent. It is understandable that a child should be the very center of his world. He hasn't started to grow up until he begins to realize that there are other people to be considered, other people who also have their rights.

Naboth had his rights, but Ahab overlooked them. The frustrated monarch went home to whine; but it could not end there. Discontent leads to evil deeds, and we infect other people with our bitter moods. While Ahab sulks, his wife comes along. She tells her husband to stop fretting; he'll get the vineyard. She will see to that! Poor Naboth, his hours are numbered. There is a conspiracy. Jezebel bribes two false witnesses, and the man is stoned to death.

Aye, Ahab! the vineyard is yours, now, but not for long! Harken! Do you not hear footsteps along the drive? You have a visitor. See! He is getting nearer. Can't you recognize him, Ahab? You know him well enough, for you have encountered him before. Yes! It is the Prophet of God, Elijah, coming to tell you that the murder—of your wicked instigation—is to be followed by retribution. Doom is to fall on you, Ahab, and on your wife and house.

Although the sulks of Ahab seemed childish, they were resultant in adult tragedy. It is ever dangerous to covet that which belongs to another. The behavior of nations as well as of individuals illustrates this truth. The trouble with acquisitiveness is that it is never satisfied. If we concentrate on the physical and material, our desires ever increase. There can be no final satisfaction, no ease of mind that way.

The Apostle Paul, writing to the Philippians, said: "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." He did not mean that he was well satisfied with his circumstances, and that he gave a placid approval to his environment. He meant that he was independent of outward things and had become "more than a conqueror." He did not consider material things to be the basis of true contentment. The external elements of his life did not make for happiness; but he knew how to be full and how to be empty. He possessed inner spiritual resources, compared with which the outward was of little account.

Let us be honest and admit that we are still terribly materialistic. As Christians we should demonstrate the sheer unimportance of temporal things by comparison with the riches of Christ. We are dreadfully slow to achieve a right sense of values. We fall so far short of the idealism of Jesus that often we act as though He never said: "Beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."

Let it not be only at funerals that we hear the solemn cry: "We brought nothing into this world, and it is cer-

tain that we can carry nothing out." If we remembered that always, we would be more swift to give the spiritual absolute priority.

Sooner or later we must come to terms with life's many refusals, and therefore we need equipment to face disappointment. There are things we cannot do and things we should not do. There are horizons beyond our reach. But even if we could have some of the things we seem to want so much, might we not remain discontented? Might we not have to confess, in the end, that none but Christ, the Truth, can satisfy? And when we long for the chance to do this and that, should we not remember that even Christ pleased not Himself?

The only way out of the winter of our discontent is to get back to the gospel of Jesus. He said: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." If only this were our absorbing concern! If only our cravings were not for things, but for Christlikeness!

Oh, do not sulk when you meet life's many refusals. Try to recognize afresh that things which seem attractive do not necessarily minister to our happiness. It would never do for us to have all we want, or think we want. Indeed, sometimes a man's greatest punishment is to be given precisely what he wants, and given, too, all that must go with it.

Covetousness is a common form of idolatry. Ahab yielded to it, and we know what evil followed. His story stands to warn us lest we, too, be infected with the germ of Ahabitis. The only cure is to cultivate the true Christian spirit to live unselfishly, to demonstrate to the world what can happen when a man's life is hid with Christ in God. It is only the consecrated follower of Jesus who can experience that contentment which belongs to a heart at leisure from itself.

We thank Thee, Lord, that here our souls,
Though amply blest,
Can never find, although they seek,
A perfect rest,
Nor ever shall—until they lean
On Jesus' breast.

If I have taught one soul to look aloft;
If I have helped one soul to live for God,
Or eased one throbbing pain,
Then I can be happy in the thought,
And I can thankful be, because I know
I have not lived in vain.

If I have fed one hungry soul in life,
Or spoken words of comfort or of cheer
To some sore heart,
Then I will thankful be, and smiling go
Along life's way—thankful for each hour that I
Can do my part.

If I have brought a smile to some sad face,
Or helped a weary one his burden bear,
Then I can say
That I have lived to do some good,
Or taught a weary one that there will come
A brighter day.

—Sel.



A STORY is told of an East Indian "holy man" who every year added a chain to his hands and feet. At last he became so encumbered with chains that when he wanted to take a railroad trip, the station agent refused to sell him a ticket; he had ceased to qualify as a passenger and had become, instead, a piece of baggage. He would have to go either by freight or in an express car.

.....

In our journey through life we unconsciously load ourselves with chains of anger, jealousy, impatience, envy, sensitiveness. They are chains of our own forging, fashioned with our own hands, securely attached to our lives by our own fingers; and by our own actions we add to their growing weight link by link until, like the Prophet of old, we are—you are—

"I am—a burden to myself."

So wearying and depressing is their effect as to rob life of its present joy and destroy its future hope.

Perhaps we have chained ourselves with the desire to seek the honor of men, and have become so concerned with what they may say and think about us that the desire for God's honor is secondary in our thoughts.

There are professional invalids in the world who spend time and money going from doctor to doctor seeking health, yet are so heavily chained by self-pity and negative thinking that the cleverest doctor can do them no good. This same inconsistency exists among professed life-seekers. They tell themselves they want to be healed; they go to the Great Physician who is able to heal every malady. But they approach Him with a negative mental attitude, saying, "There is no hope, I cannot be cured. Evil habits have such a strangle hold on me that my disease is incurable. I cannot free myself from these chains."

If we have shackled ourselves with the heavy chains of selfishness, covetousness, pride, or hurt feelings, we face a tedious task when we attempt to throw them off. If, on the other hand, we banish the evils before they become attached to us, they cannot become links to be forged into chains. Here lies the great secret of freedom from sin's binding chains: Rout the evil before it becomes linked to you. Do not give one evil desire the chance to become established in your thoughts. It is easier to keep free than to secure freedom after once we have been shackled.

When we knowingly put off the doing of the things we know we ought to do, we add rapidly to the weight of sin's chains. If we would call our trials experiences, and remember that every experience develops some latent force within us, we would grow in grace and knowledge, and be happy and contented, however adverse our circumstances. Too often we forget that temptation is a proving ground to break our will. If easily slighted or offended it shows we are still carrying the heavy chain

OF OUR OWN FORGING

"... loose the bands of wickedness . . . undo the heavy burdens . . . let the oppressed go free . . . break every yoke . . ." (Isaiah 58: 6).

of sensitiveness. If easily provoked to anger, the trying tasks we dislike the most are the best experience we could possibly have; they will help us to cut loose from a chain that has dragged many down to eternal destruction. Every step of our development into a perfect character is the removal of a chain of our own ways. Thus we gain by losing, grow by shrinking.

Psychologists tell us that our future changes with our thoughts: we become what we wish to be, do what we wish to do, when our desire corresponds with our habitual thinking. However, our chance of an eternal future changes only as we exchange our thoughts and ways for God's thoughts and ways. To become dissatisfied with our efforts and results is to remove the damaging chain of complacency.

The trials and struggles of today are but the price we must pay for the accomplishments and victories of tomorrow. Most certainly the Apostle Peter was acquainted with the heavy chains that burden human nature, and no doubt he had collapsed more than once under their weight before he wrote these words: "For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God" (I Peter 2: 19, 20). Doubtless Peter was aware that he was setting a very high standard for erring mortals, many of whom live for



praise and die of censure, but he had received this information from the lips of Jesus Himself. No one naturally likes to be told of his faults, much less endure criticism when he has done well; hence this is one of the most sturdy chains from which we must unshackle ourselves. The task is as difficult today as it was in Peter's day.

We should bear in mind that God knows our hearts and in His "Book of Remembrance" every good deed is recorded. Temporary honor may be forfeited because our virtues are not recognized. Perhaps even humiliation will have to be endured because of unjust blame. But the great, good soul is affected by neither. These things are not worthy of mention compared with the honor of having our virtues recognized and acclaimed by God in the eternal future.

Our chain-laden East Indian was jolted into a realization of the folly of his self-imposed rite when he wished to travel.

Soon dawns the Day of Account when we shall stand before the just Judge, our supreme desire to secure the ticket of admission to the new world, with privileges to "ride upon the high places of the earth," and mount aloft with the freedom of the wind (Isa. 58:14; 40:31; John 3:8). Shall we be recognized and accepted as an eligible traveler? Or shall we be rejected as—baggage?

Tribulum

WE READ that "we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." And while we know this word "tribulation" means sorrow, distress, adversity, it is also very interesting to know, and we can better appreciate the deep significance of the word, which is used not seldom in Holy Writ, by understanding how it happens to have this meaning.

The word "tribulation" comes from the Latin word *tribulum*, which was the name of a threshing instrument used by the early Roman husbandman to separate his grain from the chaff, and the act of this separation was called *tribulatio*. Then some Latin writer of the Christian Church made use of the word and idea to set forth a higher truth; as sorrow, trouble and afflictions are often the means by which the sordid, trivial and poor in man is separated from the good and true, "the precious from the vile," he called these sorrows and trials "tribulations," that is, "threshings," without which man would never be fitted for the garner of the Lord.

In some beautiful lines by George Wither, an early English writer, this development of the word *tribulum* is gracefully incorporated.

"Till from the straw, the flail the corn doth beat,
Until the chaff be purged from the wheat,
Yea, till the mill the grains in pieces tear,
The richness of the flour will scarce appear.
So, till men's persons great afflictions touch,
If worth be found, their worth is not so much,
Because, like wheat in straw, they have not yet
That value which in threshing they may get.
For till the bruising flail of God's corrections
Have threshed out of us our vain affections;

Till those corruptions which do misbecome us
Are by thy sacred Spirit winnowed from us;
Until from us the straw of worldly treasures,
Till all the dusty chaff of empty pleasures,
Yea, till His flail upon us He doth lay,
To thresh the husk of this our flesh away;
And leave the soul uncovered; nay, yet more,
Till God shall make our very spirit poor,
We shall not up to highest wealth aspire;
But then we shall; and that is my desire."

Musings of the Editor

I HAVE been thinking so much of late of that far-off Morning, so far off to Abraham, to Moses, to Daniel, and Paul, and all those who "died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off." So far off, but now so nigh to us, even at the door.

Isaiah visioned the world cleared of strife and filled with peace. There was to come One who would be possessed of great insight and fairness, with the spirit of the Lord resting upon Him. Through Him would come a mighty change in the world. When he sums up that vision in a few words, he says,

With Mind on the Morning

"They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

The Psalmist, looking forward to that beautiful far-off Morning, uttered these sweet words: "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven."

Jeremiah visioned that far-off Morning when our side—the Lord's side—would become the popular side. "O Lord, my strength, and my fortress, and my refuge in the day of affliction, the Gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit." What a day! What an hour! What a reversal!

Isaiah again picks up the glad tidings, saying, "The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee, The city of the Lord, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel."

The Prophet Micah visioned that far-off Morning when nations shall lay down their arms, beat their swords into plowshares, their spears into pruninghooks and learn war no more; and they shall sit every man under his own vine and under his fig tree and none shall molest nor make them afraid. What assurance have we that such a Morning will dawn? Listen to the answer: "The mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

The beloved Peter visioned that far-off Morning when he wrote, "Ye do well that ye take heed . . . unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the daystar arise." Christ is that bright and morning Star; He is the Sun of righteousness.

The Prophets lived for that Morning and prepared for it by transporting their minds from present perplexities to future glories. And so must we!

Meditations

On the Word

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Revelation 3: 20).

The Book of Revelation is a personal message from Jesus Himself. It was sent after Jesus ascended to heaven and had been in the presence of the Father and the holy angels for about thirty-five years. Jesus' own angel, or personal representative, was entrusted with the bringing of the message, and the exiled John the honored recipient.

Jesus here represents Himself as standing at the door and knocking. We know very well that this standing and knocking on a door must be figurative, since Jesus Himself has been away from the earth now for more than nineteen hundred years. The door upon which the knocking is done is the door of our hearts, hence neither knocker nor knocking is literal. It is the spiritual Christ, the words of truth as recorded by the Prophets, Apostles, and Jesus, that seeks admission to our hearts and lives.

In one compact statement in the Epistle to the Colossians, Paul the Apostle presents a picture of the Christ that knocks persistently at the door of our hearts: "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (1: 27). If our heart's affections are set on things above, if it is our overpowering desire to live the Christ life, then Christ, the hope of glory, is in us. It is this hope of glory, the hope of the reward awaiting all faithful ones, that can grip us, that can move us, that can knock at the door of our hearts, that can captivate and enthuse us as no other interest in life can.

To the practical, level-headed individual, hope stems from the existence of a definite set of circumstances which could logically bring about the things hoped for. The son of a wealthy financier can consistently hope to inherit a fortune; but if the son of parents so poor that they can scarcely make financial ends meet—and with nine or ten other brothers and sisters with whom the meager fortune must be shared—should hope to inherit a million dollars, that would be plain wishful thinking. Such a prospect would be too unreal to ring any bell or knock even feebly at the door of the young man's heart.

But, thank God, the hope of glory which is the Christ in us, every promise of God as revealed to us through Jesus, the Apostles and Prophets—is real enough to knock at the door of our hearts, to ring bells that can alert us to action. It is true that the things we hope for are not literally within the range of our vision—we cannot see them with our naked eye; yet to hope for them is not indicative of unwarranted optimism.

We have proof abundant of the existence of the Being who has promised the glory for which we hope. The wonders of the visible universe, both distant and near at hand, witness to the existence of a Creator, and reveal planning which proves His ability to give good gifts to His earthly children. To the cynics, life upon earth can be described as a miserable episode on one of the minor

planets. However miserable or enchanting human life may be, surely this life is not all that God can give. Mortals experience ceaseless toil, frustration, disappointment, ill health, unpleasant associations, war with its horror and destructiveness, inescapable death. The Christ that knocks at the door of our hearts has definite blessings to offer: unstinted happiness, boundless wealth, fadeless glory, enduring peace, endless life.

The Bible speaks freely of the things God can and will give: God shall wipe away tears from all faces, and there shall be no more death (Rev. 21: 4). "He maketh wars to cease unto the ends of the earth" (Ps. 46: 9). The effect of righteousness shall be "quietness and assurance forever" (Isa. 32: 17). The redeemed of the Lord shall come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads (Isa. 35: 10). "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him" (1 Cor. 2: 9).

The thought of Christ, the hope of glory, knocking at our door is beautifully presented in one of the Psalms of David. And the formula that assures the entrance of the King of glory is a wholehearted welcome on our part: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in" (Ps. 24: 9).

This King of glory is no Gestapo agent or member of the secret police who beats down the door that stands in His way. This King of glory dwells only in the hearts that welcome him, passes through only the doors that open wide in response to His knocking. All of God's servants serve Him by choice, not by coercion. He does not compel anyone to serve Him. Joshua, Moses' successor, expressed the Almighty's plan comprehensively when he said: "Choose you this day whom ye will serve; . . . but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (24: 15).

In Revelation 3, the chapter from which our meditation text is taken, John describes the Laodicean church as lukewarm, and reminds its members that lukewarmness will never usher them into the divine favor of the righteous Judge. Instead, it would cause Him to spew them out of His mouth.

The fact that the invitation to live the Christ life and share His glory still knocks at our door is no assurance that He will knock indefinitely. There is a limit to the day of opportunity open to the life seeker. One's day of salvation cannot extend beyond the close of his life. "Where the tree falleth, there it shall be" (Eccl. 11: 3). There can be no progress in the grave. And among the covenant makers who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, and who have had time and opportunity to complete their work, that auspicious event will mark *finis* to their period for preparation. The Judge will say: "The time is at hand. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still" (Rev. 22: 10, 11).

If the hope engendered by the divine promises grips our heart we will long for fellowship with God and His Son Jesus Christ. We will throw the doors of our heart wide open and implore the heavenly Guest to come in and sup with us and we with Him. We will assure Him that we have learned to speak His language, that we have learned to like His food, that His interests have become our interests, His business our business, and that we want Him to remain as our Guest always.

Your Questions Answered



BIBLICAL PERSONAL CURRENT

Do you have a question? Personal replies will be sent to Biblical questions to any correspondent, and counsel will be offered on problems pertaining to the spiritual life. THE MEGIDDO MESSAGE will publish only the most helpful discussions for the benefit of other readers. No names shall be mentioned.

Why are there so many kinds of people when all started from one man?

We do not believe that all mankind started from one man, Adam. The Bible does not teach it. The account of Creation in the first of Genesis is an outline of God's plan for the earth and mankind, and not an account of a literal creation. If taken literally, then the sun, moon, stars, the earth and man were created only six thousand years ago and in six twenty-four hour days. Reason, revelation, and science forbid such a position. Geology forbids this position; existing fossils of pre-historic men and animals forbid it.

Adam was the first man (selected from the races existing upon earth) to have revealed to him the way of salvation; he was the beginning of God's work upon earth at creating men and women in "righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. 4: 24), but he was not the father of all living, in a physical sense.

Please explain Revelation 20: 14.

"And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death."

"The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death" (I Cor. 15: 26), the destruction of which the Revelator here describes in figurative terms.

After the 1,000-year reign of Christ (Rev. 20: 4), shall follow the second resurrection, the temporary suspension of law when the rebels manifest themselves (Rev. 8: 1; 20: 7-9), and their ultimate destruction (ch. 20: 10). With the elimination of the last offender, and naught but a perfect society remaining, death itself shall be cast into the lake of fire (fire being a symbol of destruction), and earth shall see the dawning of eternity.

We read, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." What is the process of transformation from sin to purity?

The text referred to here is Isaiah 1: 18. The general context begins with v. 16 and continues to v. 20. It is plain that scarlet sins become white as snow by washing, and that the cleansing process is obedience. See John 15: 3. Ezekiel defines the process as repentance and turning from or casting away sin (18: 30, 31). Examples: "Let him that stole steal no more" (Eph. 4: 28); "Cease from anger, and forsake wrath" (Ps. 37: 8). Any sin thus washed, made clean, and turned from, is automatically forgiven.

Will there be sickness and death during the Millennium? If no sickness, what will cause death?

There will be death, but no sickness. The end of life will come painlessly and only at advanced age. A phenomenon such as this occasionally occurs with elderly people today.

The Prophet Isaiah is specific: "There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die a hundred years old; but the sinner being a hundred years old shall be accursed." "The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick" (Isa.

65: 22; 33: 24). The context in which both of these texts are used associates them with the Millennium.

During this time Christ the King and His 144,000 worthy associates, "kings and priests," will have been made equal to the angels so they can die no more. They will have been saved for time and eternity. The taking out of the great multitude of people—a great unrevealed number—which will complete God's plan to fill the earth with His glory, will be accomplished during the thousand years. These people will live normal lives of human beings: marry, raise families, build homes, engage in fruit raising and husbandry. Life will be peaceful and secure, and as the result of proper education and training the people will be relieved of many of the stresses and strains of the present. At the close of that thousand-year period all who have died during that time will be resurrected and judged. The wicked will be utterly destroyed, the righteous rewarded with immortal life, and from then on death itself shall be known no more to earth's inhabitants.

I should appreciate some light on what Bible temperance is.

We find an example of temperance in I Cor. 9: 24-27. It is to keep under the body and bring it into subjection. "Let your moderation [power of self-control] be known unto all" (Phil. 4: 5). That power of self-control embraces I Cor. 10: 31 which teaches that all we do must be done with an eye single to God's glory. Moderation or temperance must be practiced in our daily conduct and includes our speech and all that we do, as well as our eating and drinking.

Do you believe a man's soul survives the death of the body?

We believe what the Bible reveals, and human experience confirms, viz., that there can be no life apart from an organized physical body, and no thought without the organ of thought. The Hebrew word *nephesh*, translated "soul," means, "a living creature; a person; sometimes applied to animals; life." Thus we read in Ezekiel 18: 20, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." The Bible nowhere uses the phrase "immortal soul," nor is the idea implied. Man's nature is mortal, and immortality is conditional, a reward for right doing (Rev. 22: 12, 14).

Why must the people of God continually witness the violation of Deut. 22: 5?

The aforementioned text forbids a woman wearing a man's apparel and *vice versa*. Present day laxity in dress and demeanor is a part of the "perilous times" foretold for the last days (II Tim. 3). People choose to do as they please, and God does not prohibit them from doing so. He could not do otherwise and still leave mankind free to choose for themselves (Joshua 24: 15).

With the return of Christ, this season of leniency will end; God's long silence will be broken; the compelling time shall arrive; and from then on no one will have to witness the law of God flagrantly broken. In the words of Zeph. 3: 15, "Thou shalt not see evil any more." Christ's prayer for His followers that they be not taken out of the world but kept from the prevailing evil (John 17: 15), shows He was aware that over the ages they would have to practice Christian living in the presence of evil of many kinds. In these last days immorality, vice and evil would come in like a flood, said Isaiah (59: 19, 20).

GOD'S CARE

God's eye is on His children dear,
And to their cries He lends His ear.
He hears their prayer, and helps them win
If they will daily die to sin.

Not heavy is the ear of God,
Nor short the arm that wields His Rod.
'Tis sin alone that hides from view,
Nor lets His blessed glory through.

When holiness replaces sin,
And beauty fills the soul within,
Then God has promised He will hear,
And drive away all anxious fear.

In times of stress, in times of care,
When burdens 'most too hard to bear
Fall on us, oh, the sweet relief,
To know that He will share our grief,

And strengthen us to meet each test,
Provided we put forth our best.
A help is He in time of need,
A very present help indeed.

So let us lift our hearts to God,
And humbly bow beneath His Rod;
Serve Him with all our mind and soul,
And yield our all to His control.

Yes, let us lift up heart and hands
To God, and, keeping His commands,
Prove worthy of His loving care,
And His eternal blessings share.

—L. L. S.